

IN THE CLAIMS

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Please delete without prejudice claims 10 to 18 and substitute therefor new claims 19 to 31 as follows:

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--19. (New) A pulverulent mannitol having:

- an average diameter of between 60 and 200 μm ;
- a packed bulk density, determined according to the method specified in the operating instructions for the HOSOKAWA P.T.N powder tester, of between 0.65 and 0.85 g/ml;
- a flow factor of at least 60.

20. (New) The pulverulent mannitol according to claim 19 having:

- an average diameter of between 80 and 180 μm .

21. (New) The pulverulent mannitol according to claim 19 having:

- a packed bulk density, determined according to the method specified in the operating instructions for the HOSOKAWA P.T.N powder tester, of between 0.7 and 0.8 g/ml.

22. (New) The pulverulent mannitol according to claim 19 having:

- a flow factor of at least 60, preferably of between 60 and 90.

23. (New) The pulverulent mannitol according to claim 19, having a mannitol content at least equal to 96% by weight.

24. (New) The pulverulent mannitol according to claim 23, having a mannitol content at least equal to 98% by weight.

25. (New) The pulverulent mannitol according to claim 19, having a rate of dissolution of between 20 and 60 seconds when dissolving 5 g of the product until perfect visual

clarity, into 150 ml of deionised, degassed water maintained at 20°C and stirred at 200 rpm.

26. (New) A process for preparing a pulverulent mannitol having the characteristics of the pulverulent mannitol according to claim 19, comprising a step of granulating a crystalline mannitol powder by a wet route with the aid of a binder, and a maturing step, by drying, of the pulverulent mannitol thus obtained.

27. (New) The preparation process according to claim 26, wherein the granulation stage is carried out in a continuous mixer granulator.

28. (New) An excipient in preparation intended in particular for a pharmaceutical field, comprising pulverulent mannitol according to claim 19.

29. (New) An excipient for powder for filling hard capsules, comprising pulverulent mannitol according to claim 19.

30. (New) An excipient in preparation intended in particular for a pharmaceutical field, comprising pulverulent mannitol as produced in claim 26.

31. (New) Excipient for powder for filling hard capsules, comprising pulverulent mannitol as produced in claim 26.--

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 10 to 18 have been withdrawn from examination without prejudice and have been replaced with new claims 19-31. Claims 19 to 31 are pending.

In particular, the following amendments were performed in the claims:

New claim 19 corresponds to former claim 10.